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From left: A US soldier points a gun at a passenger at Kabul airport; travellers enter Pakistan through the Chaman border; a Taliban fighter sits on the back of a vehicle with a machine gun in front of the main gate leading to the presidential palace; people climb atop a plane as they wait at Kabul airport | AFP/ PTI

Don't abandon Afghans, UN urges world leaders

United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres on Monday said the world cannot abandon the people of Afghanistan. "All of us have seen images in real time. We urge all parties especially Taliban to protect lives. The world cannot abandon people of Afghanistan."

Taliban not to interfere in US evacuation operations

The Taliban has agreed to the US demand not to interfere with the US military's evacuation operations at the Kabul airport, reports said. Top US commander for West Asia General Frank McKenzie got the militia to agree to such a pact during the Doha consultation, reports added

Washington Post's SOS to Biden to save journalists

Washington Post publisher Fred Ryan on Monday sent an urgent plea, on behalf of the New York Times, Wall Street Journal and Washington Post, to US National Security advisor Jake Sullivan to help get "204 journalists, support staff and families" to safety

'Shackles of slavery' broken, says Pak PM Imran Khan

Hailing the Taliban for helping Afghans break the "shackles of slavery", Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Monday said becoming a mental slave was worse than being an actual slave, adding that subjugated minds can never make big decisions

MEA sets up special cell to coordinate repatriation

The Ministry of External Affairs has set up a special cell to coordinate repatriation and other requests from Afghanistan, MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said.
Phone number: +919717785379 Email: MEAHelpdeskIndia@gmail.com

FEAR AND DESPERATION

10 killed in Kabul airport evacuation chaos, three of them dropping off flights that took off; US rushes more troops; IAF plane in Kabul to bring back 200 Indians

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

A day after the Taliban captured Kabul, the Afghan capital on Monday witnessed utter chaos with hundreds of people thronging the airport in a desperate bid to get out of the country. Videos of scores of people running on the tarmac and others clinging on to the body of a US Air Force plane taxiing to take off captured the extent of desperation among the locals. There were other videos of people swarming parked planes and clambering onto them. A stampede at the airport following firing by US Marines to shoo away the locals ended up killing at least seven people, reports said.

Three other Afghan nationals fell to their death from the sky as they were clinging to a US Air Force plane when it took off. The horror was caught on videos that went viral.

Airports operations had to be briefly halted as crowds became unmanageable with some people even trying to block the runway to stop planes from taking off without them.

As the Afghan airspace remains shut for commercial flights, India said it is monitoring the situation closely and will do everything in its power to ensure the safety and security of its citizens and assets in Afghanistan.

"We are aware there are still some Indian nationals in Afghanistan who wish to return and we are in touch with them," said Ministry of External Affairs Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi.

He added that New Delhi is in touch with the representatives of Afghan Sikh and Hindu communities. "We will facilitate repatriation to India of those who wish to leave Afghanistan. There are also a number of Afghans who have been our partners in the promotion of our mutual developmental, educational and people to people endeavours. We will stand by them," he said and added that the repatriation will start after commercial operations begin.

The spokesperson's comments come at a time when sources said that a special Indian Air Force C-17 plane has been dispatched to Kabul to bring back around 200 Indians, including diplomats and their families, and 100 ITBP personnel. The plane is scheduled to return by 10 pm on Friday.

Over 60 countries have issued a joint statement saying Afghans and foreign citizens who want to leave the country must be allowed to depart and border crossings must remain open.

In the United Nations Security Council meeting on Monday, India said the current situation in the war-torn country is of 'great concern'. P9, 12

Govt proposes snooping probe panel

KANU SARDA @New Delhi

THE Centre on Monday proposed to set up an expert panel to go into the entire gamut of Pegasus snoopgate, while declining to give a clear yes or no answer to the question on whether it has procured the spyware, citing security concerns.

In a two-page affidavit filed before a bench headed by Chief Justice of India N V Ramana, the Union information and technology ministry said the petitions demanding a court-monitored probe into the matter are based on conjectures, surmises and unsubstantiated media reports or incomplete or uncorroborated material. The proposed probe committee, it added, would dispel the wrong narratives spread by vested interests.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said any discussion or debate on these issues would involve national security. When the bench suggested that the Centre should file a detailed affidavit in the matter, Mehta said, "if your lordships are convinced that this needs to be gone into, then there would be issues of national security." He, however, said the Centre had nothing to hide.

Rebutting the bench's observation that "you do not want to take a stand," Mehta argued that the Centre has already taken its stand in Parliament. The court deferred the hearing for Tuesday while asking Mehta to inform whether he wants to revisit his decision.

On the proposed expert committee, the bench asked as to how a technical committee would check what authorisations were given for use of the spyware; if it was used at all; and who issued permission and the sanction to procure it.

Mehta said the court can invoke its extraordinary power to lay down a mandate for it.

Make tribunal appointments in 10 days: SC

New Delhi: Expressing displeasure at the Centre for not making appointments to various tribunals despite recommendations by the Selection Committee, the Supreme Court on Monday gave it 10 days to do so, or face action. P10

JAB-O-METER

TAKE YOUR SHOT

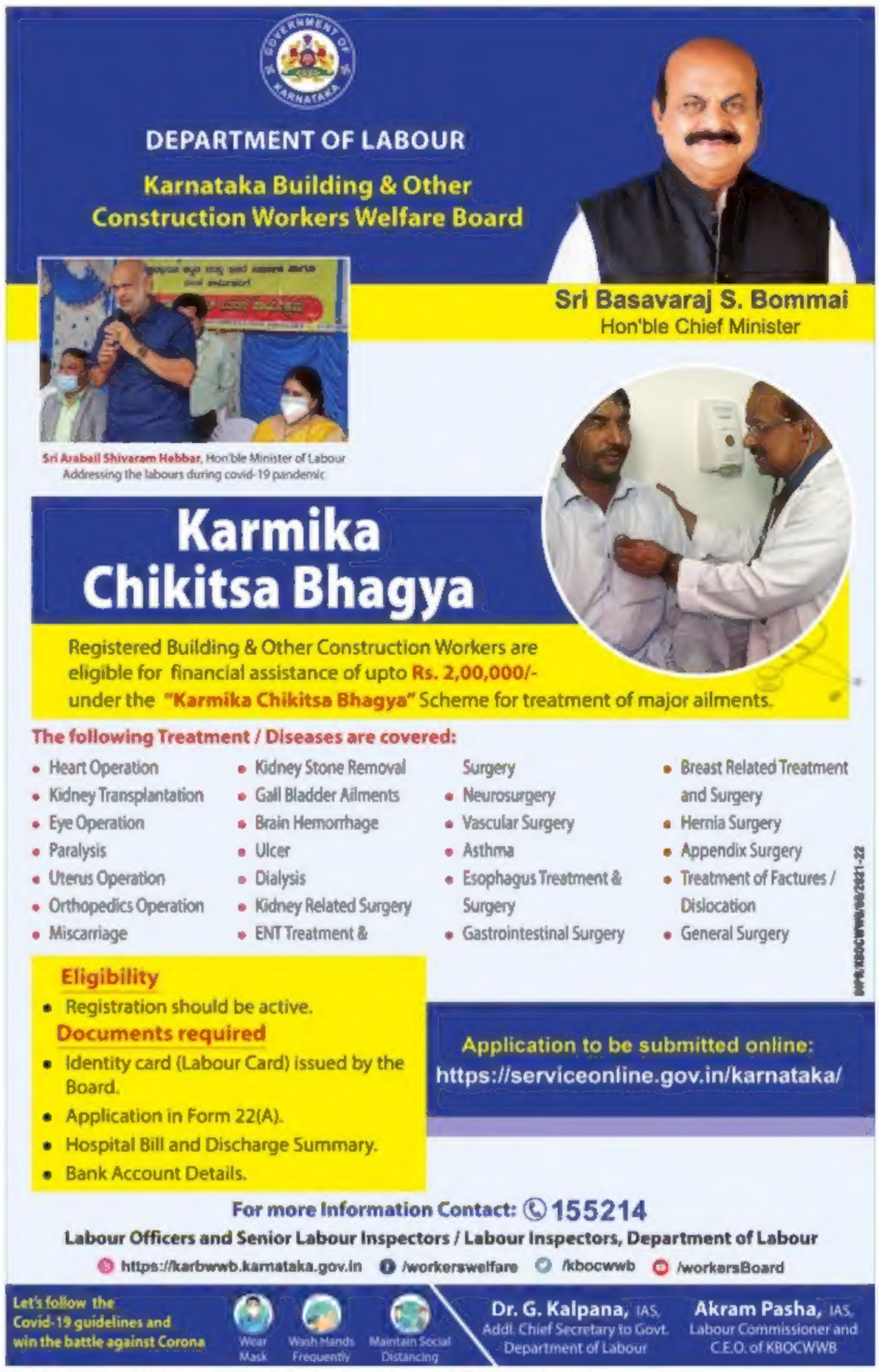
August 15
17,43,114 doses

August 16
35,85,834 doses

TOTAL DOSES: 55,14,89,021

NATIONWIDE	AUG 15	AUG 16
Fresh cases	36,083	32,937
Recoveries	37,927	35,909
Deaths	493	417

KARNATAKA	AUG 15	AUG 16
Fresh cases	1,431	1,065
Recoveries	1,611	1,486
Deaths	21	28


GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR
Karnataka Building & Other Construction Workers Welfare Board
Sri Basavaraj S. Bommai
Hon'ble Chief Minister
Sri Arabail Shivaram Hebbar, Hon'ble Minister of Labour
Addressing the labours during covid-19 pandemic
Karmika Chikitsa Bhagya
Registered Building & Other Construction Workers are eligible for financial assistance of upto Rs. 2,00,000/- under the "Karmika Chikitsa Bhagya" Scheme for treatment of major ailments.
The following Treatment / Diseases are covered:
• Heart Operation
• Kidney Transplantation
• Eye Operation
• Paralysis
• Uterus Operation
• Orthopedics Operation
• Miscarriage
• Kidney Stone Removal
• Gall Bladder Ailments
• Brain Hemorrhage
• Ulcer
• Dialysis
• Kidney Related Surgery
• ENT Treatment & Surgery
• Neurosurgery
• Vascular Surgery
• Asthma
• Esophagus Treatment & Surgery
• Gastrointestinal Surgery
• Breast Related Treatment and Surgery
• Hernia Surgery
• Appendix Surgery
• Treatment of Factures / Dislocation
• General Surgery
Eligibility
• Registration should be active.
Documents required
• Identity card (Labour Card) issued by the Board.
• Application in Form 22(A).
• Hospital Bill and Discharge Summary.
• Bank Account Details.
Application to be submitted online:
https://serviceonline.gov.in/karnataka/
For more Information Contact: 155214
Labour Officers and Senior Labour Inspectors / Labour Inspectors, Department of Labour
https://karbwwb.karnataka.gov.in /workerswelfare /kbocwwb /workersBoard
Let's follow the Covid-19 guidelines and win the battle against Corona
Wear Mask
Wash Hands Frequently
Maintain Social Distancing
Dr. G. Kalpana, IAS, Addl. Chief Secretary to Govt. Department of Labour
Akram Pasha, IAS, Labour Commissioner and C.E.O. of KBOCWWB

SAFETY FIRST IN SCHOOLS
Not more than two students per bench
No sharing of food and water
Written consent from parents to attend physical classes
No meetings, festivals and other activities involving many students
Maintaining 3-6 ft distance from each other mandatory while entering schools. Schools should mark out boxes
A teacher to be made nodal officer to oversee the protocol and submit daily report to the principal
Parents, SDMC members and other visitors have to wear masks; no outsiders allowed inside classrooms
Water to be drained from overhead tanks and sumps, cleaned thoroughly and dried for a day before refilling
Every part of the school must be sanitised

Classes 9, 10 to open half-a-day from Aug 23

PEARL MARIA D'SOUZA @Bengaluru

THE department of public instruction on Monday released protocols for reopening of Classes 9 and 10 from August 23 in districts with less than 2 percent Covid-positivity rate. Students will have classes for half a day for the first few days. The department has drawn out a timetable for offline classes where classes start at 10 am and end by 12.30 pm.

The standard operating procedure for Classes 11 and 12, which are also reopening from August 23, will be announced on Tuesday, officials said.

Offline classes are not compulsory, and students can attend online or other alternative modes of learning, like watching lessons aired on TV. The schools are expected to make arrangements for students not attending physical classes. P2

HC: Grilling Shaheen schoolchildren with firearms a violation

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

AFTER looking at photographs of policemen with weapons interrogating children of Shaheen Education Society at Bidar in connection with a sedition case, the Karnataka High Court on Monday observed that prima facie, it is a serious violation of children's rights and directed the State Government to issue orders to ensure such violations do not occur.

The case pertains to a play staged by students of classes 4, 5 and 6 of Shaheen Primary and High School in Bidar on January 21 2020, which allegedly questioned the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and National Registry of Citizens (NRC). The play had also allegedly made a derogatory comment against Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The police later visited the school many times to question the students and teachers.

On Monday, the court ordered the State to submit a report on the action taken against the policemen. Passing the order, the court observed that it is a violation of Section 86(5) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act. P5

Worried Afghan students want to return

AMIT S UPADHYE & MALLIKARJUN HIREMATH @Dharwad

EVEN as dramatic scenes of chaos unfolded at Kabul's Hamid Karzai International Airport after the Taliban took over the Afghan capital, students from the war-torn country who are studying in India are worried about their families and friends back home.

A group of Afghan students at the University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS) in Dharwad has requested the authorities to send them back home so that they can be with their families. But that is next to impossible as there are no flights available and the air space over Kabul has been shut. The anxious students have been constantly calling their families, over the last few days to know about their wellbeing and the situation on the ground.

The students are worried that soon, they may not be able to contact their dear ones as restrictive and ultra-right Taliban may decide to cut the internet and telephone links.

Of the 15 Afghan students studying at UAS Dharwad, five left for Afghanistan about two months ago because of Covid curbs. But 10 students, some of whom are pursuing their PhDs, could not go back. Desperate for help, they have now approached the local police. P7

> Our family members had asked us if we could go back. We decided to wait as we are pursuing our studies. Now, things have gone bad for them
>
> Afghan student, UAS Dharwad